



Protecting Children by Strengthening Families

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# media release

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April 2009

## **April - Child Abuse Prevention Month** *Community Support to Stop the Abuse of Children*

Child abuse prevention efforts have made dramatic improvements in the lives of children and youths. More and more children and families in crisis are being linked with resources, information, support and opportunities to help them on their road to success.

Franklin County Children Services provides help for more than 28,000 children each year and believes that the key to preventing child abuse and neglect is the education and involvement of individuals and community organizations. April is Child Abuse Prevention Month and a time for everyone to take notice and focus on keeping children safe.

Franklin County Children Services is commemorating the month with a series of events and activities. These will draw attention to both the harsh realities of child abuse and neglect and the hope of changing the lives of children for the better through education, intervention and the example of successful child abuse prevention efforts.

Children Services will begin the month by working with Prevent Child Abuse Ohio (PCAO) on its Pinwheels for Prevention campaign, designed to increase public awareness. During April, 8,238 colorful pinwheels will be displayed throughout Franklin County, each representing a report of child abuse or neglect in the county in 2007.

The Franklin County Commissioners will present a resolution encouraging citizens to take part in prevention efforts, and will have a pinwheel display at the county complex. PCAO will host a Pinwheels for Prevention kick-off event

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Franklin County Children Services

Child Abuse Prevention

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at noon on March 30, at Nationwide Children's Hospital in Stecker Auditorium. Pinwheels will be planted prior to the kick-off event at Livingston Avenue Park near Children's Hospital on March 29 beginning at 1p. Children Services employees will plant pinwheels at all office locations on April 7 and have literature available during the remainder of the month. Abuse prevention information will be distributed throughout the month, including Healthy Kids Day at Eastland Mall on April 11.

The annual Child Abuse Prevention Breakfast will be held on Wednesday, April 8 at the Confluence Park Restaurant at 7:30 a.m. This event is hosted by Children Services and its Citizens Advisory Committee to honor those who have promoted child abuse prevention and those who have overcome its effects. College scholarships will be awarded to youths; and youths and a family will be honored for making life changes that have helped them build brighter futures. The Pinwheels for Prevention award will be awarded to a kinship family. Community advocacy awards will be presented to individuals, organizations and businesses that have gone the extra mile to help children under agency care. The Nancy Fitzgivens Child Protection Award will be given to a social worker who has done outstanding work in child protection.

All events during April will stress that prevention depends on finding solutions to the problems that cause child abuse and neglect and mobilizing the community to take action. It can be successfully prevented by education, information, help for parents under stress, and through successful intervention programs.

Despite child abuse prevention efforts many children continue to be left behind. Children die every day from abuse and neglect, and often someone is aware of the abuse but did not report it. Nationally, three million reports of child abuse and neglect are made to Children Services agencies every year. In Ohio, every 10 minutes a child is abused or neglected.

Franklin County Children Services works in partnership with more than 100 other local and statewide agencies and organizations to provide prevention, protection, placement and permanency services. Call the Franklin County Children Services 24-hour child abuse hotline at 614-229-7000 to report abuse or neglect. For more information, visit the website at [www.franklincountyohio.gov/children\\_services](http://www.franklincountyohio.gov/children_services).

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